



State of Arizona
Department of Education

Tom Horne
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Administrators of the Child and Adult Care Food Program Centers

FROM: Mary Szafranski, Deputy Associate Superintendent
Arizona Department of Education, Health and Nutrition Services

Melissa Conner, Director
Child and Adult Care Food Program

Original Signed

DATE: June 25, 2008

SUBJECT: Automatic Eligibility for Free Meal Benefits Extended to All Children Enrolled in Head Start

This memorandum provides guidance regarding amendments to the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act that extend automatic eligibility for free meal benefits to all children enrolled in Head Start and participating in child nutrition programs, such as the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

On December 12, 2007, the President signed The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-134) which contains several significant revisions to the Head Start Program, including amendments to the eligibility criteria in section 645 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9840). Public Law 110-134 also amends section 9(b)(12)(A)(iii) and 17(c)(5) of the NSLA to correspond with the eligibility criteria.

Head Start serves primarily children from families with household incomes at or below the Federal poverty level. However a small proportion of children in families with household incomes above the poverty level may be served. In the past, only those children who were income eligible for Head Start were considered automatically eligible for free meals in the child nutrition programs.

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Public Law 110-134 makes any child enrolled in Head Start automatically eligible for free meals without further application or eligibility determination. Therefore, even a child who is not from a household with an income at or below the poverty level is automatically eligible for free meals if they are enrolled and participate in Head Start.

All reimbursable meals served to children enrolled in Head Start may be claimed at the free rate. Head Start programs may submit revised claims to claim all reimbursable meals served to Head Start enrollees that were not previously claimed at the free rate. All such reimbursable meals served December 12, 2007 and beyond may be claimed.

Please have all the revised claims to the Arizona Department of Education, Health and Nutrition Finance Department no later than December 26, 2008. For information on how to file the revised claims, please contact Tina Rangel at 602.364.2358.

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